Australian Bureau of Statistics

6265.0 - Underemployed Workers, Australia, Sep 2005

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 23/03/2006

MEDIA RELEASE

March 23, 2006 Embargoed: 11:30 AM (AEST) 25/2006

18% of part-time workers are underemployed: ABS

Almost one in five (18%) part-time workers are underemployed, according to analysis released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

In September 2005 there were an estimated 2,839,900 part-time workers, of whom 612,000 wanted more hours of work. More than 84% (516,800) of the 612,000 part-time workers who wanted more hours were classified as underemployed (i.e. were available to start more hours within four weeks). Over half (55%) of the 516,800 underemployed workers would have preferred to work full-time.

More underemployed part-time workers were female (66% or 340,700) than male (34% or 176,100), but women wanted fewer extra hours per week on average (13.3 hours) than men (16.3 hours).

The duration of underemployment for part-time workers varied by age, with older people experiencing longer periods of underemployment. The median duration of underemployment overall was 26 weeks. There was marked variation across ages, ranging from 16 weeks for those aged 15-19 years to 52 weeks for those aged 55 years and over.

Just over half (53% or 275,400) of underemployed part-time workers looked for more hours of work in the four weeks up to the survey reference week. The most commonly reported main difficulties in finding more hours of work were:

- 'no vacancies in line of work' (19%)
- 'unsuitable hours' (10%), and
- 'lacked necessary skills or education' (9%).

The proportion of underemployed workers who 'searched the internet' to find work with more hours showed a marked increase between September 2002 and September 2005, rising from 26% to 42%. The majority of this increase occurred between September 2004 (32%) and September 2005 (42%).

Further details can be found in **Underemployed Workers, Australia, September 2005** (cat. no. 6265.0), available from the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au>.

Media note: The median duration of underemployment is the duration which divides underemployed persons into two equal groups: one comprising persons whose duration of underemployment is above the median, and the other comprising persons whose duration is below it.

This page last updated 23 February 2007

© Commonwealth of Australia

All data and other material produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) constitutes Commonwealth copyright administered by the ABS. The ABS reserves the right to set out the terms and conditions for the use of such material. Unless otherwise noted, all material on this website – except the ABS logo, the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and any material protected by a trade mark – is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia licence